the General Financial Rules, which may be exercised in consultation with Integrated Finance. Outsourcing of services may be examined on case to case basis, and the Services would have to satisfy themselves with regard to the security concerns. However, actual outsourcing due to deficiency of civilian manpower has not yet been resorted to by the Army, Navy and Air Force.

Appeals to trace PoW

3135. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are many appeals to trace PoW including a flag officer from Malappuram district of Kerala who had gone missing during the 1971 Indo-Pakistan war;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the number of soldiers who are in Pakistan jails;

(c) the steps taken to trace the soldiers who had been missing during the 1971 war; and

(d) whether any steps had been taken to trace the above Kerala PoW after the report appeared in the various newspapers that he is interned in Pakistan jail?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (d) The relatives of missing Defence personnel including that of Flying Officer from Malappuram, Kerala of 1971 Indo-Pak War have been approaching the Government from time to time to trace their relatives.

About 54 missing defence personnel of 1971 War are believed to be in the custody of Pakistan. The Government of Pakistan has, however, been consistently denying the presence of any such personnel in its custody. The Government of India have been pursuing this issue with Pakistan for a long time and is deeply concerned about it.

This issue was taken up with the Pakistan Government at various levels on a number of occasions. Most recently, during the visit of External Affairs Minister, to Islamabad in January, 2007, the matter was raised with the President of Pakistan and the latter in turn agreed to a visit by a small group of relatives to Pakistan.

Accordingly, a delegation of 14 relatives of missing defence personnel visited 10 Jails in different parts of Pakisan from 1st June, 2007 to 14th June, 2007. But they could not find any missing defence personnel of 1971 War.

The Government will continue to take up the issue of missing defence personnel with the Government of Pakistan as it has been doing in the past.

Dialogue on Defence Cooperation with Malaysia

t3136. MS. SUSHILA TIRIYA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been some dialogue between India and Malaysia in connection with enhancing cooperation in the field of defence;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the progress made in this regard so far?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (c) Malaysia-India Defence Cooperation Committee (MIDCOM) has been established under the provisions of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed with Malaysia in 1993.

†Onginal notice of the question was received in Hindi.